

ARE THEY LYING TO US ABOUT:



SUSTAINABILITY?



OF COURSE THEY ARE

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TOPIC1: SUSTAINABILITY?

Hummus was always organic!!!

Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, you should be able to:

- Recognize how sustainability became a marketed concept.
- Identify pre-colonial and indigenous forms of sustainable living.
- Reflect on how “green solutions” may reproduce old systems of power.
- Question the ownership and authorship of environmental knowledge.

Key Q

Who defines what “sustainability” means — and who benefits from that definition?

Reading Passage

Sustainability

Article [Talk](#)

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

"Unsustainable" redirects here; not to be confused with [Unsustainable \(song\)](#).

Sustainability (from the latin *sustinere* - hold up, hold upright; furnish with means of support; bear, undergo, endure) is the ability to continue over a long period of time.^{[1][2]} In modern usage it generally refers to a state in which the environment, economy, and society will continue to exist over a long period of time.^[3] Many definitions emphasize the environmental dimension.^{[4][5]} This can include addressing key [environmental problems](#), such as [climate change](#) and [biodiversity loss](#). The idea of sustainability can guide decisions at the global, national, organizational, and individual levels.^[6] A related concept is that of [sustainable development](#), and the terms are often used to mean the same thing.^[7] **UNESCO** distinguishes the two like this: "*Sustainability* is often thought of as a long-term goal (i.e. a more sustainable world), while *sustainable development* refers to the many processes and pathways to achieve it."^[8]



WIKIPEDIA
The Free Encyclopedia

Heal hu and nature



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Main Ideas

“Sustainability” is often presented as a new global goal — yet, long before the term existed, communities across the Global South practiced it daily. Composting, sharing food, building with earth, and working with the rhythms of nature were not framed as “green” acts; they were survival, care, and culture.

The modern sustainability agenda, however, was largely shaped by the same institutions that promoted industrial growth and colonial extraction. By defining what counts as “sustainable,” they also define who gets funding, whose methods are valid, and whose are forgotten.

Today’s “eco-solutions” — solar panels, carbon credits, imported organic goods — often target symptoms of a system built on exploitation. What was once common sense became a brand. The most radical act may not be innovation, but remembrance: re-learning the wisdoms of mud houses, date palms, wind towers, and slow economies that lived lightly on the land.

Discussion

Ask yourself - friend - family to describe something their parents or grandparents used to do that we now call eco-friendly.

Examples: reusing jars, drying herbs, cooking seasonally, repairing clothes.

Then ask: When did we stop doing that?

First, they ask us to care.
Then, they sell what
we care about.



We fix a world that keeps *breaking* for profit.



Suggested Task

Read the back of "eco" and "organic" products.
Ask: selling or caring? usually just selling.



No point in over-preparing..
for what is *Natural*

Q & A



Are they lying to us about sustainability?

Yes — they built the concept to sell the solution - to problems they made. The so-called “sustainable future” is a repackaged colonial present.



Who defines what is sustainable?

The same powers that defined what is “developed.”



Are First-World solutions irrelevant to the Global South?

Yes. Because those “solutions” fix problems that wouldn’t exist without colonial extraction in the first place.



Did the South already have climate answers?

Yes — in architecture, agriculture, and communal life that worked with nature, not against it.



What went wrong?

The system turned necessity into profit, care into branding.



Can design be decolonial?

Only when it remembers its ancestors - geographically specific solutions like mud building, wind towers, terraces, and shared shade.





What is real sustainability?

It's not a certification.
It's survival knowledge we forgot to cite.



Why do they sell us “green” lifestyles?

To fix problems that wouldn't exist without
them.



What's wrong with their “solutions”?

They are context-blind. Western sustainability
criteria were designed for different climates,
materials, and histories.



Did developing countries already invent low-impact systems?

Yes — irrigation, passive cooling, communal
farming, clay architecture, slow economies.
Then those systems were erased and resold.



Is capitalism bad by itself?

We don't know. We know that Profit-driven
colonialism is. Innovation is human; extraction
is design.



So what is sustainability, really?

Remembering what we already knew — that the
world regenerates when we stop monetizing care.





A Carl Giles style British cartoon illustration, black and white ink drawing with cross-hatching, modern 2025 setting in a developing country village, simple open-air classroom with basic furniture, earnest male aid worker gesturing enthusiastically to a group of traditionally-dressed village women seated on benches looking skeptical, detailed cluttered table in foreground overflowing with plastic bottles, plastic stationery, plastic packaging, cardboard boxes prominently labeled "SDG 17" next to piles of plastic waste, more plastic items scattered around the room, visible through open window a small airplane trailing thick black smoke across the sky, busy composition with multiple expressive characters, vintage British satirical cartoon style with contemporary ironic social commentary, detailed linework, slightly caricatured features, gentle humor highlighting contradiction --ar 16:9 --style raw --v 6

AI-generated illustration:
Midjourney + Claude Sonnet
prompt assistance

ow with further educational materials."

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Bag of

whats the proplm wit these bagz??!



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by Claude Sonnet
Personal Assistant

Rap Singing Time

*To get always what I think you I need
I call that - greed
Travel everywhere for free
Zero carbon by 2030? Please.*

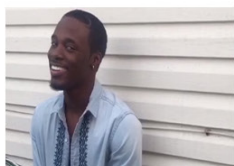
*It wants to feel good -wants to glow
Wrapped up in plastic head to toe.
Fake fabric makes my skin crawl
Makes my head hurt through it all.*

*Grandma ^{sdzcaklmdfvz} knew how to live light
Didn't need a PhD to get it right.
They study her like she's brand new
Write a thesis on her stew.*

*Sustainability's her Tuesday
But the credits?
They don't choose her way.*







Watch the Brazil Climate Summit

• LIVE

Some 50,000 people from
more than 190 countries
have are expected to attend a
12-day event





Thought Experiment

Normal hummus goes bad after 5 days.
Store-bought “organic” hummus lasts for weeks.
Ask: Is sustainability still “organic” when it’s built for the shelf, not the soil?





Ai-generated
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Personal Assistant

Jokes & Laughs Time

- Congratulations! You discovered that flying 10 times a year isn't carbon neutral - Nobody saw that coming.
- Sustainability? More like sus-disability (the only thing it sustains is guilt).
- Sustainability is the study of what poor people have been doing out of necessity.
- SDG Goals > ignoring how people lived before capitalism and calling it 'under-researched.'
- Sustainable innovation: When people with money finally try what poor people never stopped doing.
- Sustainability studies: Because not throwing away food needs a literature review.
- Your zero-waste lifestyle is someone else's Tuesday.
- Your thesis on sustainable agriculture is your great-grandmother's Tuesday.



Exercises Time

1 Re-write the following: (first in English, then in your language - mine is arabic)

Real sustainability isn't an invention of the 21st century – it's earth's memory.

.....

الاستدامة الحقيقية ليست اختراع القرن الحادي والعشرين إنها ذاكرة الأرض

.....

2 Are the sentences True or False:

True False

1) The concept of the "carbon footprint" was popularized by BP (British Petroleum) to shift responsibility from corporations to individuals.

☐☐

2) If every person on Earth recycled perfectly, it would solve the climate crisis.

☐☐

3) Paper straws were invented before plastic straws.

☐☐

4) Electric cars are always better for the environment than gas cars.

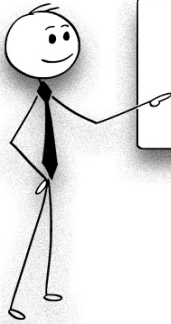
☐☐

5) Sustainability became a mainstream buzzword around the same time corporations realized they could profit from guilt.

☐☐

We tried to fix the planet's data, and more certifications that even knowledge its

- 1) T BP launched a major campaign in the early 2000s
- 2) F 100 companies are responsible for 71% of global emissions
- 3) T paper straws existed in the 1800s; plastic straws came in the 1960s
- 4) F depends on how the electricity is generated and battery production impact
- 5) T In My Opinion



<; Suggested Life Hack ;>

You are hungry by yourself/ or a friend - choose a small local restaurant that is not very busy - sit in it.

Summary / Self-Assessment

Real sustainability isn't an invention of the 21st century — it's a memory. The global "green" agenda often sells back what communities once practiced freely. To move forward, we may need to look backward.

**We don't need innovative climate solutions.
We need to stop cheap capitalist products.**

Any product purchased — how much greeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeen it clamis to be — takes sth from the environment — and that's ok. As long as you know what I took - and give it back - reap what you sow. Consumption is not bad - it's natural. Solution starts with buying truly better products = consuming less .

*with more reports, more
tions — until we realized
self had been colonized .*

Sustainability of Death of the c

Sadaqah Jariyah

In **continuous charity** or **ongoing charity** (Arabic: صدقة جارية, romanized: *Sadaqah Jariyah*) refers to any act that continues to benefit humanity even after the death of its initiator. Whoever leaves a beneficial legacy for humanity is deemed to continue to be rewarded for it even after their death.

"When a person dies, his deeds come to an end except for three: Sadaqah Jariyah (a continuous charity), or knowledge from which benefit is gained, or a righteous child who prays for him."

of the deceased



the world is changing

This series includes:

- Sustainability?
- Academia?
- Borders?
- Mental Health?
- Religion?
- Global South?

That
Joke
Isn't
Funny
Any
more
xd!!

YES
فعل

6 ZINES